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SUBJECT: TRAVEL TO IRAQ FROM JORDAN 2: RATES RISE FOR HACC
FLIGHT

REF: A. AMMAN 5890

[1](#)B. AMMAN 6064

[1](#)1. (U) SUMMARY: In the interim prior to the creation of a logistics center to assist USG personnel transiting Jordan en route to Iraq (ref A), the Embassy wishes to supply the Department and all other interested USG personnel with information on current options for travel from Jordan to Iraq. This is the first update of the Embassy's cable presenting all travel options to Baghdad; the information herein supersedes the information given in all prior cables. Notable changes of the past two weeks include an increase in ticket rates, an additional Sunday flight, and an expansion of categories of authorized travelers for the RJ/HACC charter flight, a tightening of the categories of authorized travelers for the AirServ flight, and a reduction in UNHAS flights into Iraq. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) There are currently three different ways to travel from Amman to Baghdad by air. All three leave from Marka Airport, located in downtown Amman, about 25 miles from Queen Alia International Airport.

RJ/HACC CHARTER

[1](#)3. (U) The Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC) in Amman, in partnership with Royal Jordanian Airlines initiated a charter flight from Amman to Baghdad on August [1](#)18. A 48-seat airplane departs Marka Airport at 0830 and arrives in Baghdad at 1130 on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Return flights depart Baghdad at 1330 and arrive in Amman by 1530 on those same days. On October 16, the service will begin regular Thursday flights. This flight is available for two categories of travelers. DOD and CPA personnel, diplomatic personnel of the U.S. and coalition governments, and officials of Iraqi ministries will be charged USD 125 one-way and USD 200 round-trip and will receive first priority in the booking of the flight. Authorized USAID, CPA, and DOD contractors, personnel from the UN and humanitarian organizations, and non-coalition diplomats will have secondary priority in bookings and will be charged USD 425 one-way and USD 800 round-trip for the flight. USAID personnel will be given third priority in bookings, and will pay USD 165 one-way and USD 330 round-trip. Finally, other passengers (primarily accredited journalists) may be authorized to travel by HACC based upon special circumstances. These will be given last priority and will pay USD 600 one-way and USD 1100 round-trip. These rates represent an increase from previous levels, but will likely soon be decreased if insurance companies agree to remove a supplemental risk premium.

[1](#)4. (U) All passengers are limited to 20 kilos of baggage and will be charged USD 5 per kilo for excess baggage. In Baghdad, private contractor CusterBattles offers a USD 25 land transport service in conjunction with flight arrival and departure times that runs between the airport, the Republican Palace, the Palestine and Sheraton hotels, and the IAC/Al-Rasheed. Travelers may register for this flight from Amman or get more information about it by contacting LTC Chuck Litzleman of HACC-Amman at 962-77-485-998 or by e-mail at ChuckLitz@hotmail.com. Upon approval by HACC, or with valid identification certifying membership in one of the above categories of authorized travelers, passengers will purchase tickets for a flight directly from Royal Jordanian Airlines.

AIRSERV

[1](#)5. (U) A second air option is offered by the USAID grantee AirServ, which is operating 14-seat aircraft from Amman to Baghdad twice a day on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and once a day on Tuesday. Flights from Amman on Sunday and Wednesday also continue to Erbil, and on Monday and Thursday also continue to Basra. (This schedule will be valid throughout October.) USAID personnel fly free of charge on this flight. Personnel of USAID implementing partners and

unaffiliated humanitarian NGOs are charged USD 165 for a one-way ticket to Baghdad, with extra charges to continue to Basra and Erbil. US and foreign diplomats may use these flights if space is available and are charged USD 660 for a one-way ticket to Baghdad, with extra charges for Basra and Erbil. No military personnel are allowed on the flight. Passengers may carry no more than 20 kilos of luggage; excess baggage will be carried at an additional charge if there is room. In Baghdad, AirServ does not offer ground transportation from the airport; passengers will need to make their own arrangements for such transportation. Persons wishing to register for this flight, obtain a full flight schedule, or find out further information may do so by contacting the AirServ booking office at 962-79-694-1365 or by e-mail at Jordan@airserv.org

UNHAS

16. (U) UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights are a third option for air transport from Amman to Baghdad. The UN is currently operating four aircraft flying at different times between Amman and Baghdad, as well as to other destinations in Iraq and in neighboring countries. According to the current flight schedule, there is at least one flight a day, departing Amman between 0830 and 1000 and traveling to Baghdad and back, from Sunday to Thursday. There are also flights departing Amman at 0830 for Erbil on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. UNHAS no longer flies to Basra. The recent drawdown of UN personnel in Iraq has meant that the schedule is subject to change on a day-to-day basis, depending upon the needs of the UN. It also likely will mean a substantial decrease in flights into Iraq in the near future, after the last of the UN staff evacuations have been completed. Current schedules may be obtained by contacting UNHAS at 962-79-666-9947 or by e-mail at rabie.allouh@wfp.org. Seats on the UN flight are available free of charge to two tiers of passengers, with UN personnel given priority. If space is available, members of humanitarian NGOs operating in support of the UN mission to Iraq and high-level (First Secretary and above) diplomatic personnel on official travel related to humanitarian work in Iraq may also use the aircraft free of charge, on a first-come, first-served basis. If space remains after these two categories of passengers have been fully served, other governmental personnel may be able to obtain seats on the flight subject if clearance is granted from the office of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq. Passengers are limited to a maximum of 25 kilos of luggage, although this amount may be limited even further, based on the needs of the UN. In Baghdad, the UN is offering land transport between the airport and the Canal Hotel, timed with the arrival and departure schedule. Passengers for UNHAS flights cannot register by telephone; booking requests must be placed by e-mail to iraq.unhas@wfp.org. Further information on UNHAS booking procedures, regulations, and points of contact may be obtained at www.unjlc.org

OTHER LOGISTICAL REQUIREMENTS

16. (SBU) There are no visa requirements for entry into Iraq; travelers to Iraq crossing the land border must pay a fee equivalent to approx. 40 US cents. Jordanian compliance with CPA Order 16 (signed June 27, 2003), requesting that foreign governments honor expired Iraqi passports less than four years out of date, has been spotty. Jordan does not require visas for Iraqi passport holders; however, it has turned away many Iraqis at the port of entry. GOJ is also considering the imposition of a more stringent set of documentary requirements for Iraqis in the near future (ref B). Jordan does require visas for US and EU passport holders, which may be purchased for JD 18/USD 25 upon arrival in Jordan. USG employees are reminded to consult the Foreign Visitors Guide for information on official notification procedures for traveling to Jordan.

GNEHM